

REMARKS

Claims 2-24 and 26-47 are pending in this application. Claims 2, 4, 5, 9, 14, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 32, and 41 are in independent form. Claims 3, 23, and 26 depend from claim 2, claim 24 depends from claim 4, claims 6-8, 12-13, and 27-29 depend from claim 5, claims 10-11 depend from claim 9, claims 15-16, 19, 30-31, and 42-47 depend from claim 14, and claims 33-40 depend from claim 32. Claims 19 and 31 have been amended. Claims 42-47 are new and incorporate subject matter from claims 19 and 31, which were amended. No new matter has been entered.

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for his reconsideration of the prior final office action and for the indication of the allowance of claims 2-13, 17-18, 20-24, 26-29, and 32-41. Applicants address the Examiner's remaining reasons for rejection below.

The Examiner rejected claims 14-16, 19, 30, and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based upon the combination of U.S. Patent No. 5,354,953 to Nattel et al. and U.S. Patent No. 4,140,293 to Hansen. The Examiner found that Nattel discloses a gangable electrical unit, but does not disclose an adhering element for engaging the wall of an electrical outlet box. The Examiner adds the teaching of Hansen to supply the adhering element, stating that Hansen teaches a bracket that defines a front opening and an adhering element on the bracket for engaging the wall of an electrical outlet box. Applicants disagree that the combination of Nattel and Hansen render the pending claims obvious.

Nattel teaches a ganged electrical assembly where a bracket is welded to the side of an electrical box. Hansen teaches a bracket that is designed to partially encircle a wall stud and an electrical outlet box can be coupled to the bracket by an epoxy. The bracket of Hansen is used in replacement of having to nail the electrical box directly to the stud. Hansen does not teach a bracket configured to house an electrical component, nor does the bracket of Hansen have a front opening.

Applicants submit that the combination of Nattel and Hansen is improper because there would be no motivation on the part of Nattel to look to Hansen for assistance in attaching the bracket of Nattel to its electrical box. In particular, Nattel already provides a means for attaching the bracket to an electrical outlet box in a permanent fashion--welding. Nattel satisfies its own requirement to attach the bracket and there would be no motivation for Nattel to look elsewhere for a substitute means for attaching its bracket to its electrical outlet box. It is in hindsight only

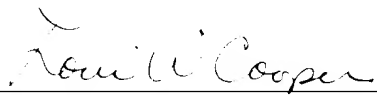
that the teaching of Hansen is applied herein to Nattel. For these reasons, applicants submit that the rejected claims are allowable over the combination of Hansen and Nattel.

Furthermore, while Hansen teaches an epoxy (a flexible thermosetting resin), which is believed to be a form of adhesive, it does not teach a double-sided tape, a putty, or a hook and loop tape, as now separately claimed in claims 19, 31, and 42-47. For this additional reason, applicants submit that the claims are allowable over the combination of Nattel and Hansen.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider this application with a view towards allowance. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney if a telephone call could help to resolve any remaining issues.

Applicants enclose a fee transmittal identifying the fees associated with the additional dependent claims. Should any other fees be required, the Assistant Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees to deposit account No. 50-1432.

Respectfully submitted,



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